

So, it was a stroke of luck when a group called 'Exhoodus' was holding a briefing on the Hill encouraging Congress to take action combating gang violence. The forum was hosted by Bill Cosby with a panel made up of ex-gang members who had all spent time in jail for murder and drug related crimes. The group traveled around America to speak to youths and deter them from entering gangs. They informed us that gangs were now recruiting from primary school, with gang members being as young as 8 years old.

Inspired by the work of this group, I figured that the only way to find out what to put in the legislation was to ask those directly affected by the issue. As such, we organized to visit the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home to have a tour of the facilities and speak to some of the children incarcerated there.

It was the most significant part of my internship and one of the most confronting experiences of my life. Some of these kids were 10 or 11 and had already spent 2 or 3 years in detention. As we spent time with these kids, I realized that they were just normal kids who had made one mistake. Most of these children came from broken homes, with violent, alcoholic fathers or mothers prostituting themselves to support their drug addiction. Being in a gang not only provided them with a family unit, but also provided them with money to support their families. They too had dreams of becoming a chef, journalist or an NBA basketball player, but were victims of the streets and of a society that couldn't provide the security and safety that they felt came from being in a gang.

When we told these kids that we wanted them to help us create this piece of legislation to combat gang violence, their reaction was something I can still picture today. They were bursting with ideas on how to improve their local communities and get gangs off their streets and kids back into school.

As we continued to work on the legislation, I was given the opportunity to travel to Florida to visit the Congressman's district and finally experience some resemblance of a summer.

I visited both of the Congressman's district offices—in Ft. Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. His staff took me around the streets of Ft. Lauderdale and I couldn't believe my eyes. I was driving through the ghetto. There was rubbish littering the streets, police officers outside houses questioning people and young men dealing drugs openly on street corners.

Actually seeing the district and understanding where the Congressman came from made me fully appreciate his fight against racial discrimination and injustice. His policies began to make more sense and I gained a lot more motivation for my gang violence work.

After discussing the issue of gang violence with local officials and police, it became evident, and quite frustrating, that nobody wanted to take responsibility for fixing the problem. It was only when we visited a community university that we discovered a possible idea for legislation that would assist with gang violence.

We organized for community colleges to work with local prisons to create reintroduction programs for those who had spent time in juvenile detention. Our purpose was to deter them from falling back into gang activity. The legislation, entitled 'Path to Success' promotes initiatives to provide at-risk youths with counseling and academic and vocational training. Ultimately, this program is based on a principle that is a central tenet of law all over the world reintegrating offenders as a means of rehabilitation.

Last week to my delight, I received an email from the Congressman's office. It was

to inform me that the Bill had passed through Congress and the Senate. The 'Path to Success' program was finally becoming law in the United States.

My experience in Congress has made me realize that we should never feel too small or powerless to make a difference. Upon reflection, after working with people like Congressman Hastings and Eric Federling, if we all took the most valuable commodity we have—our time, and use that for the benefit of others, in a personal way, imagine what a difference we could make.

Although, throughout the internship, I was acting as an Ambassador for my university and Australia, at times we felt like we were acting as ambassadors for those kids who were stuck on the streets of America. Helping the Congressman to produce this piece of legislation was one of the most rewarding and proudest moments of my life.

Being a final year law student from Deakin University, I was given the chance to make a small, yet tangible contribution in the most powerful Government in the world. Through this, I discovered that the opportunity to make a difference is out there for each and every one of us. As the playwright, George Bernard Shaw once wrote, 'Dream things that never were and say, why not?'

COMMEMORATING THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate once again the anniversary of Turkey's illegal invasion and occupation of Cyprus, beginning in 1974, lasting up to the present time. The division of Cyprus has wreaked havoc on the island nation and left its Turkish-occupied section in disarray. It is cruel that the Cypriot people should continue to be subjected to this conflict.

Two summers ago, we were all pleased to see the two sides reach a major breakthrough in the troubled history of this divided island. After years of conflict, both sides committed themselves to the reunification of Cyprus based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation and political equality. By agreeing to these principles, they recognized the status quo is unacceptable and that continuing it only hurts Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

Now, the two parties have set up working groups and committees so they can begin implementing the agreement they reached in 2006. In just a few days, Cypriot President Christofias will meet with his Turkish counterpart, Mr. Talat, when they will review the progress of these working groups. It is my hope—and I believe my colleagues share in my feeling—that the two sides will soon be able to begin full-fledged negotiations, leading to a final status agreement and the removal of all Turkish troops from the island. Last fall, this House expressed its support for these efforts by unanimously passing H. Res. 405, of which I was a proud cosponsor.

Madam Speaker, we urge the two parties to move forward in their discussions and, at the same time, we urge the international community to step back and allow the Cypriots—and the Cypriots alone—to make the decisions affecting their future. No one can force an agreement on them.

TRIBUTE TO DR. YUHUA WANG

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Dr. Yuhua Wang, who has been recognized as a great artist and sculptor.

Dr. Wang was born in Sichuan, China, and permanently resides in the United States. Since 2000, she has worked as a visiting professor of oriental arts in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University, where she has received several commendation certificates for excellent work performance.

In August 2008, Dr. Wang's book entitled *World's Highest-Level Color Paintings and Ink-Wash Paintings* will be published and distributed worldwide by International Arts Publishing. Dr. Wang has meticulously and delicately applied fine-brushwork and oil colors on hand-sculpted coral and cobblestones which have become treasures of the world.

In the history of Chinese art, her lotus flower paintings are unsurpassed and are extremely valuable. In addition to being proficient in Chinese paintings, she is a highly talented sculptor whose themes are nature's mountains, rocks and plants. Dr. Wang's skills in the creation of colors, paintings and sculptures have reached the acme of perfection in their exquisiteness, elegance and beauty.

Dr. Wang, who takes great pleasure in helping others, is a selfless person whose moral character is noble, which is evidenced by the numerous awards and honors she has received. She has made great contributions to the development of cultural exchange between the East and West. Through her practice of Buddhism, Professor Wang benefits humanity and all living beings.

Madam Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Dr. Yuhua Wang, an outstanding artist and scholar, who has chosen to make her home here in the United States because she has heartfelt love for its people.

NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2008

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the National Energy Security Intelligence Act of 2008, H.R. 6545.

Our Nation is in the middle of an energy crisis. Oil and gas prices are continuing to climb past \$4 a gallon, and it is unlikely that gas will ever be cheap again. We will never be able to meet our domestic demand even if we drill on every square inch of our public and private lands. The United States possesses only 2 percent of the world's oil reserves, yet consumes over 25 percent of the world's oil. In order to meet our demand we import 22 million barrels of oil a day from some of the most volatile regions of the world. There is no denying that our national security is weakened by our dependence on foreign fuels.

While it is intuitive that our reliance on the international market for our oil and gas supply has an effect on the stability of our economy and our national security, we do not have up-to-date intelligence information on what this dependence means to our national and global security. The legislation before us today would require a National Intelligence Estimate, NEI, of the long-term and short-term outlook for oil and gas prices, supply, and demand as well as an assessment of how our dependence on foreign fuels affects both our short-term and long-term national security. I would like to commend my colleague from Louisiana, Representative DON CAZAYOUX, for introducing H.R. 6545. This legislation would provide us with the information that we need in order to make informed decisions about the relationship between crude oil and natural gas prices and our national security.

The National Energy Security Intelligence Act would also study the national security implications of potential use of energy resources as leverage against the United States by Venezuela, Iran, or other potential adversaries as a result of increased energy prices. One of the most damaging ways Iran could leverage oil prices higher would be to disrupt or even cut off the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. As chairman of the House Select Intelligence Oversight Panel, I believe it is essential that this NIE address Iran's ability to attack shipping and oil production infrastructure in the Persian Gulf region. Twenty years ago, Iran's efforts to disrupt shipping in the gulf led directly to a military confrontation between our countries. Published reports indicate that Iran has greatly expanded its sea mine stocks, its ballistic missile force, and other assets that could be used to disrupt oil production and shipment through the gulf. The NIE must address these issues if we are to have a full picture of Iran's potential to drive oil prices higher through military action. I support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do likewise.

HONORING WALTER GLENN KELM

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Walter Glenn Kelm, who was recognized this week by Florida Governor Charlie Crist with the Points of Light Award for his outstanding volunteerism. Glenn has committed countless hours and tireless efforts for the past 16 years to provide healthy meals for those less fortunate.

Glenn began his volunteer mission in 1992 when he established the Shephard's Cupboard. Each day after work Glenn would collect food from local grocery stores and donate it for those who otherwise could not afford a nutritious meal. Then, in 1997, he left the Shephard's Cupboard to help start the Volunteer Way Food Bank. Glenn has served many roles at the Volunteer Way, including volunteer board member and later treasurer, but has always stepped up with a smile to do whatever needed to be done. Because of Glenn's active involvement, the Volunteer Way quickly expanded their outreach. Last year they distributed over 5,000,000 pounds of food all over central Florida to those who most need it.

Madam Speaker, Glenn's devoted volunteer efforts have helped provide so many Floridians with healthy meals. I am very much honored to recognize a man whose work has greatly improved the lives of those less fortunate, and will undoubtedly continue to do so. I congratulate him for deservingly receiving the Points of Light Award and believe all American can learn from his commitment and passion.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF EAST CENTRAL ALABAMA UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay special recognition to the work of East Central Alabama United Cerebral Palsy. For the last 50 years, this admirable organization has pursued its mission of providing personalized educational and therapeutic services to children with a wide range of developmental disabilities.

In January of 1972, ECAUCP opened Calhoun County's first cerebral palsy center. Just 6 years later the center expanded to provide a full range of treatment for children in need. Today, ECAUCP and the State Department of Mental Health spearhead Alabama's Early Intervention Program which benefits developmentally delayed children and their families.

I am pleased to help recognize the fine work of East Central Alabama United Cerebral Palsy, and wish them the very best in their next 50 years of service to our communities.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL GEAR UP DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2008

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1311, supporting the designation of July 22, 2008 as National GEAR UP Day. Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) serves to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Through the hard work of program staff, students, families, and educators, GEAR UP has proven to be an incredibly successful program, providing services at high-poverty middle and high schools. This year marks the 10th Anniversary since Congress established the GEAR UP program, exemplifying our commitment towards providing a quality education to the disadvantaged youth of America.

In a society that depends on, and rewards, those who have a strong educational background, lagging behind can have severe consequences. In this day and age, when our country has transitioned from a post-industrial economy into a knowledge based economy, investing in education is more important than ever, and a high school degree is seen as one

of the first steps towards achieving that quality education. Research has shown that having a high school degree significantly increases an individual's annual earnings and labor force participation rates, and that these rates increase with greater educational attainment.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 8.9 percent of 15–24 year-old students from low-income families dropped out during grades 10–12 in 2005, compared to 3.8 percent from middle-income and 1.5 percent from high-income families. In the same year, 53.5 percent of high school graduates from low-income families enrolled in college immediately after high school, compared to 65.1 percent of middle-income students and 81.2 percent of high-income students.

GEAR UP is currently focused on three objectives to reduce the disadvantages low-income students face compared to their middle-income and high-income peers: increasing academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education, increasing high school graduation and post-secondary enrollment rates, and increasing students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing. These efforts are working—in 2006, 85.5 percent of the second cohort of GEAR UP students graduated from high school. This remarkable graduation rate is well above those of other low-income students who did not participate in GEAR UP (64 percent) and all students nationally (73.9 percent).

While the effects of GEAR UP are evident, there are currently many low-income students who are unable to participate in the program and many areas in which the program can improve. We need to raise awareness and bolster discussions about how to tailor GEAR UP for all of our low-income students. Recognizing July 22nd, 2008 as National GEAR UP Day could provide the opportunity for conversation about the challenges and opportunities faced by lower income students and will recognize the success of so many who have defied expectations. Funding is also vital towards the successful implementation and expansion of GEAR UP, and as a Member of the Appropriations Committee, I will work to ensure improved funding for GEAR UP and other critical Federal programs focused on improving educational opportunities, supporting the work of teachers and schools, and increasing access to higher education.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is July 23, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That's just today, Madam Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,966 days since the tragedy called Roe v. Wade was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation